

ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a surface inspection method and apparatus for inspecting a surface of a sample, in which a resistive film is coated on the surface, and a beam is irradiated to the surface having the resistive film coated thereon, to thereby conduct inspection of the surface of the sample. In the surface inspection method of the present invention, a resistive film having an arbitrarily determined thickness t_1 is first coated on a surface of a sample. Thereafter, a part of the resistive film having the arbitrarily determined thickness t_1 is dissolved in a solvent, to thereby reduce the thickness of the resistive film to a desired level. This enables precise control of a value of resistance of the resistive film and suppresses distortion of an image to be detected.